Ministry of Forests
Resource Management Plan
Recreation Component

April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2005

compiled by
Forest Practices Branch
Forest Development Section
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Ministry of Forests Resource Management Plan – Recreation Component

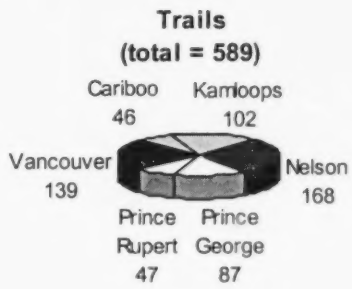
Introduction

The Ministry of Forests (ministry) manages recreation resources and public use on Crown forest lands. Managing the recreation resource involves:

- maintaining an inventory of recreation features and recreation settings;
- planning for recreation; and
- incorporating recreation information into referrals for operations proposed on Crown forest lands.

To enable the public to enjoy Crown forest lands for recreation, the ministry manages,

- 1,118 recreation sites; and
- 589 recreation trails.



Background

In 1998, no base funds were available for maintaining recreation sites and trails. The lack of site and trail maintenance resulted in an escalation of public and media complaints during the summer. In response to this situation, the ministry allocated $1.0 million to keep the recreation sites open, nothing more.

In 1999, recreation fees at sites and some trails were introduced to partly recover the cost of maintaining these facilities. (See **Appendix 1** for a description of the recreation fees). The ministry was able to provide basic maintenance at most of the recreation sites, at a cost of $2,358,000 with funding coming from three sources:

1) Revenue from the recreation fees ($392,000 camping pass and $166,000 camping permit);
2) $1.0 million ministry base funds; and
3) approximately $800,000 of risk managed base funds from other programs.

In addition $200,000 was allocated to regions for compliance and enforcement patrols, some of which was used to patrol recreation sites.

In 2000, more than 300 recreation sites were either closed or transferred to BC Parks, reducing the total number of sites managed by the ministry to 1118. The Ministry was able to provide basic maintenance at most of the recreation sites at a cost of $2,725,000 with funding coming from the following sources:

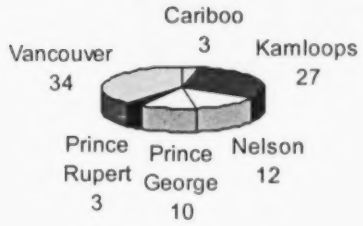
1) revenue from the recreation fees ($750,000 camping pass and $175,000 camping permits);
2) $1.0 million ministry funds; and
3) approximately $800,000 risk managed funds from other programs.

In addition $140,000 of base funds was allocated to regions for recreation site patrols.

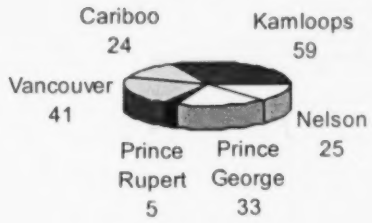
Issues and Implications

To date, revenue from recreation fees and funding from government have not been sufficient to manage the recreation sites to ministry standards. The lack of funding has prohibited the ministry from maintaining the infrastructure at recreation sites, estimated to be worth over $13 million. As a result there is a backlog of structure repair and replacement dating back to 1998 when funding was first cut. As an example some sites have deteriorated to the point where essential structures such as entrance signs and toilets are no longer in place.

Number Of Recreation Sites Without A Toilet (total = 89)



Number Of Recreation Sites Without An Entrance Sign (total = 187)



Compounding the problem of deteriorating conditions at recreation sites is a higher public expectation of service and structures at these facilities due to the fact that fees are being charged.

No funding has been dedicated to trails since 1997. The trails and the infrastructure on them are deteriorating and public safety, environmental and liability risks are escalating. The ministry will have to review the option of closing trails do to lack of funding next year.

No resources have been available to carry out recreation resource management activities except at a very cursory level.

At the time the recreation fees were introduced it was estimated that the revenue from camping pass sales would eventually cover approximately 40 to 50% of the costs of managing the recreation sites. In 1999 revenue from the camping pass sales was approximately $450,000 and is forecasted to increase to approximately $550,000 in 2000. It appears that the initial target of 40 to 50% cost recovery from camping pass sales will be very difficult to achieve. Consequently the need for more government commitment to the program is required if the existing number of recreation sites and trails are to be maintained.

2001-02 Priority Ranking and Funding Needs for Recreation Activities

Given the lack of funding, newly introduced user fees, higher public expectations, on-going deterioration of the infrastructure and escalating public safety, environmental and liability risks, it is critical that the RMP build the business case for public recreation opportunities managed by the ministry. In this regard, the priority ranking and funding needs for recreation activities are as follows:

For Recreation Sites and Trails

1. **Critical Priority**

Basic Site Maintenance
$2,537,000 is required to for site maintenance activities that if not carried out next year will lead to:

- significant public safety risks;
- environmental damage;
- increasing liability risks and possible court action; or
- widespread adverse publicity.

Basic Trail Maintenance
$841,000 is required for trail maintenance activities that if not carried out next year will lead to:

- significant public safety risks;
- environmental damage;
- increasing liability risks and possible court action; or
- widespread adverse publicity.

Recreation Fee Administration
$95,000 is required for recreation fee administration to ensure that revenue is collected to partly off-set the cost of managing the campgrounds and trails. (See **Appendix 2** for a breakdown of the administrative costs)

A total of **$3,473,000** is required for critical priority fee administration and site and trail maintenance.

2. **High Priority**

Recreation Site Patrols
$433,000 is required for essential recreation site patrol activities that if not carried out year will lead to:

- significant public safety risks;
- vandalism and loss of structures at campgrounds;
- reduced compliance and less revenue from camping fees; or
- widespread adverse publicity.

Backlog Structure Repair and Replacement (Sites)
$1,105,000 is required for essential "catch-up" repair and replacement of structures that have not occurred at the recreation sites since 1997 due to funding cutbacks.

Annual Structure Repair and Replacement (Sites)
$1,367,000 is required for essential repair and replacement of structures that must be carried out in order to protect and maintain the ministry 's $13 million investment at the ministry's recreation sites. Note information on trail infrastructure is not available at this time.

A total of **$2,905,000** is required to carry out high priority site patrols, backlog replacement of structures and annual replacement of structures.

3. **Moderate Priority**

Site and Trail Rehabilitation
Activities required for monitoring and evaluating the condition of the ministry's recreation sites and trails, planning and carrying out rehabilitation at sites and trails. (**Note:** figures have not been provided for this activity at this time.)

4. **Low Priority**

Development
Improvements that will enhance forest recreation opportunities for the public. (**Note**: figures have not been provided for this activity at this time.)

See **Appendix 3** for provincial and regional information on site and trail management activities.

For Recreation and Visual Landscape Management

The following recreation and visual landscape management needs represent input from half of the districts (22 of 40 reported). Future Resource Management Plans will include more comprehensive information on recreation and visual landscape resource management needs. (Note: recreation and visual landscape inventory activities are included under the Forest Inventory component of the Resource Management Plan).

1. **High Priority**

$271,000 is required to complete essential recreation and visual landscape resource analysis and planning that if not carried out will lead to:

- significant conflicts with other forest resources and recreation activities;
- loss of recreation and visual resource values; or
- widespread adverse publicity.

2. **Moderate Priority**
   $259,500 is required to complete recreation and visual landscape research, operational trails and studies that if not carried out will lead to:
   - continued conflicts with other forest resources and recreation activities; or
   - loss of recreation and visual resource values

3. **Low Priority**
   $5,000 is required to monitor recreation and visual landscape resources to enhance these resources.

See **Appendix 4** for region information on recreation and visual landscape resource management needs.

For further information on the ministry's recreation program or to answer questions concerning the information in this document, please contact Bill Marshall (387-8382) or Ward Trotter at (356-5887), Forest Practices Branch.

APPENDIX 1: Summary of Ministry of Forest Recreation Fees

Type Of Fee	Where Fees Apply	Fee Rate	Sold By	What Money is Used For
Camping Pass	• all campgrounds	• $27.00 (annual) • $22.00 (seniors rate) • $8.00 (per night)	• government agents, sub-issuers, FS offices	• money used to keep campgrounds open
Enhanced Campground Fee	• high-use campgrounds	• $10.00 (per night) • Annual pass holder discount of 50% ($5.00/night)	• Contractor	• money retained by contractor to pay for enhanced services
Enhanced Trail Fees (for enhanced services, e.g., track-setting, cabins)	• about 30 trails	• locally determined	• club (non-profit group)	• money retained by club to pay for enhanced services
Other Fees a) brochures	a) all districts	a) between $2.00 to $4.00 (to be determined)	a) government agents & sub-issuers	a) money to pay for printing and distribution of brochures
b) firewood	b) some campgrounds	b) price range from $2.00 to $5.00 per bundle (locally determined)	b) contractor or club	b) money to contractor/club to pay for provision of firewood

APPENDIX 2: Administrative Costs for Ministry of Forest Recreation Fees

Item	# Printed in first run	Total cost for 2000 $
Product Design	na	5,000
Annual Camping Pass	60,000	15,000
Single-Night Camping Pass	20,000	3,000
Enhanced Campground Permit	100,000	5,000
Fees brochures	100,000	7,500
Rules brochures	100,000	7,500
Fees posters	5,000	5,000
Rules posters	5,000	5,000
Enhanced Fees Posters	0	0
Campground directory	-	2,000
Advertisements	na	40,000
Disabled Stickers	0	0
Camping Pass Stickers	0	0
TOTAL		$ 95,000

Appendix 3: FS Recreation Site and Trail Management Activities for the 2001/02 Resource Management Plan

Provincial

	Priority Critical				Priority High						Priority Moderate		Priority Low		
Activity	Basic Site Maintenance		Basic Trail Maintenance		Site Patrols		Backlog Replacement of structures		Annual Replacement of Structures		Site/Trail Rehabilitation		Site/Trail Development		
District:	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	Total $'s
Cariboo	129	345,000	46	100,000	54	47,000	406	200,000	2,359	111,000					
Kamloops	318	588,000	102	165,000	139	121,000	1,008	286,000	4,655	312,000					
Nelson	210	292,000	168	106,000	54	48,000	348	146,000	2,842	260,000					
Prince George	192	347,000	87	116,000	55	48,000	594	167,000	2,696	150,000					
Prince Rupert	84	193,000	47	151,000	35	30,000	81	21,000	1,691	146,000					
Vancouver	185	772,000	141	203,000	159	139,000	633	285,000	4,574	388,000					
Sub-total by Activity	1,118	2,537,000	591	841,000	496	433,000	3,070	1,105,000	18,817	1,367,000					
HQ Branch	Rec Fee Admin.		$95,000												
Total by Priority	$3,473,000				$2,905,000										
Total year 02 - 03	3,820,000				$1,980,000										
Total year 03 - 04	4,202,000				$2,178,000										
Total year 04 - 05	4,623,000				$2,396,000										

Not included at this time

Basic Maintenance is defined as clean out houses, tidy rake area, clean firepits, minor repairs to structures, pump toilets, collect garbage and manage hazard trees
refers to numbers of campgrounds and day use sites

Basic Trail Maintenance is defined as clearing windfall, hazard trees and bush, maintaining trail tread and minor repairs to structures and markers.
refers to number of trails

Site Patrols # refers to number of patrol days (2 person 8 hours shift)
covers overtime costs

Backlog Replacement of structures are for sites only, trail structures are not included at this time.

Annual Replacement of structures is based on a 10-year expected life of structures and so equals 10% of the total value of the structures.

Total Years 2002-2005

- Priority high includes site patrols and annual replacement of structures (backlog replacemernt of structures addressed in 2001-2002).
- Figures in year 2002 - 2005 increase 10% per year

APPENDIX 4: Recreation / Visual Landscape Management for the 2001-02 Resource Management Plan

	# Districts	PRIORITY HIGH		PRIORITY MODERATE		PRIORITY LOW	
Region	**Reported**	**#**	**$**	**#**	**$**	**#**	**$**
Cariboo	0/5						
Kamloops	2/7	1	20,000				
Nelson	5/6	5	51,500	3	3,000		
Prince George	6/8	5	59,500	4	44,000		
Prince Rupert	4/6	1	5,000	5	125,000		
Vancouver	5/8	3	85,000	2	12,500	1	5,000
Headquarters	1/1	1	50,000	1	75,000		
Total		16	271,000	15	259,500	1	5,000
Total year 02-03			298,000		285,000		
Total year 03-04			327,000		313,500		
Total year 04-05			360,000		345,000		

Recreation / Visual Landscape Management Activities include:

- research, monitoring, operational trails and studies
- user surveys, analysis and development of data bases
- recreation, visual landscape, historic trail, access, cave and other plans

Recreation inventory activity is included under the Forest Inventory Component of the RMP

Total Years 2002 – 2005

- Figures in year 2002 – 2005 increase 10% per year